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CHRIST THE OBJECT OF RELIGIOUS
ADORATION; AND THEREFORE,
VERY GOD.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
AT ST. MARY'S,
ON SUNDAY, MAY 14, 1775.

BY GEORGE HORNE, D. D.
PRESIDENT OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN
COLLEGE,
AND CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY.

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R o M. X. 13.

WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL UPON
THE NAME OF THE LORD, SHALL
BE SAVED.

TH E text, as Dr. Whitby well remarks upon it, presents us with a double argument in favour of our Lord's Divinity. First, it applies to *him*, what by the prophet Joel is spoken of Jehovah; secondly, it affirms him to be the object of religious adoration. Either of these particulars does, indeed, imply the other. For if he be Jehovah, he must be the object of religious adoration; and, if the object of religious adoration, he must be Jehovah. We might therefore take occasion, from this passage, to prove his Divinity, and from thence infer, that he is to be worshipped; but, at present, that the subject may be viewed on every side, let us take it in another light; let us first prove, that he is to be worshipped, and from thence infer his Divinity.

But it is incumbent upon me previously to observe, that, since the composition of the

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following discourse, the cause has been pleaded at large by much abler advocates^a; for which reason, a resolution was once taken to lay it aside, as fully and happily superseded. But a saying of one of the ancients occurred, that, in times when erroneous and noxious tenets were diffused, all men should embrace some opportunity to bear their testimony against them. It occurred likewise, that the evidence, drawn to a point, and delivered from the pulpit, might strike many (of my younger auditors more especially) who might not be disposed to search for it in tracts of greater extent, and far greater merit. This consideration, above all, prevailed, that the established doctrine concerning the worship of our Redeemer might receive no small degree of confirmation in the minds of it's professors, when, without concert or consultation, persons sitting down to reconsider it, at different times, and in different places, should be found to represent it in the same light, and to vindicate it by the same arguments. Intreating your

^a See Dr. Randolph's *Vindication of the Worship of the Son and Holy Ghost*; and Mr. Bingham's *Vindication of the Doctrine and Liturgy of the Church of England*. See likewise Mr. Burgh's *Scriptural Confutation of the Arguments against the one Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*.

favourable-

favourable acceptance of this very necessary apology, I will venture to proceed.

Invocation, then, is a part, and a principal part, of adoration ; but my text mentions the invocation of Christ, as a duty, to the performance of which, salvation is annexed. “ Whosoever shall call upon the “ name of the Lord, shall be saved.” The context treats wholly of Christ, in whom, it is said, “ Whosoever believeth shall not “ be ashamed ;” and in whom, it is likewise said, the Jews refused to believe, when they had heard of him by the preaching of the Apostles. “ Whosoever shall call on the “ name of the Lord, shall be saved. But “ how shall they call on *him*, of whom “ they have not *heard* ? and how shall they “ hear, without a *preacher*,” &c. Christ therefore is, without doubt, the person mentioned in the text ; he is, consequently, the object of invocation, a principal part of religious adoration ; and the man who desires to be “ saved,” must “ call upon him,” by prayer.

In the apostolical times, all Christians were supposed, by virtue of their profession,

to invoke Christ, and were characterized by that very circumstance. Thus St. Paul addresses one of his epistles, "to all that
 " in every place call upon the name of the
 " Lord Jesus, both theirs and ours;"^a that is, says an excellent paraphrast,^b whom we and all true Christians join in acknowledging and adoring as their Lord and ours. In the ixth chapter of the Acts, we find Ananias saying of Saul, "And here he hath authority to bind all that call on thy name;" that is, says Dr. Hammond, who publicly avow the worship of Christ. Again, in the same chapter, we read, "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, is not this he that destroyed them who *called on this name?*" that is, evidently, the name of Christ.

Some critics tell us, that the phrase *ἐπικαλούμενοι τὸ ὄνομα Χριστοῦ* is to be taken passively, as denoting those who were *named by the name of Christ*, or who were called, *Christians*. But this cannot be. The name, *Christian*, was not known in the world, till

^a 1 Cor. i. 2.

^b Dr. Doddridge.

some

some time after St. Paul's conversion, when, as St. Luke expressly informs us, "the disciples were called *Christians* first at Antioch"; whereas, before that time, they were distinguished by the title of *ἐπικαλούμενοι τὸ ὄνομα Χριστοῦ*. Besides that *ἐπικαλεομαι*, (as hath been justly observed) when followed by an accusative case, always signifies to *invoke*, or *worship*, except only where it signifies to *appeal to*. Thus, in the chapter from whence my text is taken--"The same Lord "is rich *εἰς πάντας τὰς ἐπικαλούμενους αὐτὸν*--*πάς γὰρ ὅς αὖ ἐπικαλεσῆται τὸ ὄνομα Κυρίου σωθήσεται*." In the xxiii^d chapter of the Acts, Saul is bidden to "wash away his sins, *ἐπικαλεσάμενος τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου*." And Origen, who must have understood the import and force of a Greek participle, at least as well as any modern critic, commenting on one of the above cited passages, says---"The Apostle, "in these words, declares him to be God, "whose *name was called upon*." ^b The argument, therefore, deduced from this expression, we may venture to say, stands good; nor can it admit of any farther reply, or evasion.

^b Origen. Com. in Rom. x. Lib. viii.

St. Paul's usual form of benediction was by invocation of the name of Christ. "Grace
 " be to you, and peace, from God the Fa-
 " ther, and from our Lord Jesus Christ." Sometimes the name of Christ stands in the first order; "The grace of the Lord Jesus
 " Christ, and the love of God, and the com-
 " munion of the Holy Ghost be with you
 " all."^a In another place, "The Lord Jesus
 " Christ comfort your hearts;"^b that is, I pray the Lord Jesus Christ so to do. And speaking of his thorn in the flesh, he says---"I
 " besought the Lord thrice, that it might de-
 " part from me. And he said unto me, My
 " grace is sufficient for thee; for *my strength*
 " is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly
 " therefore will I rather glory in my *infirmi-*
 " *ties*, that *the power of Christ* may rest upon
 " me,"^c--The *power of Christ*, that is, plainly, of *the Lord* whom he besought, and who said, *My strength is made perfect in weakness*.---I would intreat your attention to the following passage in 1 John v. 13, &c. "These things
 " have I written unto you--that ye may be-
 " lieve on the name of the Son of God. And
 " this is the confidence we have in him, that
 " if we ask any thing according to his will,
 " he heareth us. And if we know that he

^a 2 Cor. xiii. 14.^b 2 Thess. ii. 16,^c 2 Cor. xii. 8.

" hear

“hear us, whatsoever we ask we know that
 “we have the petitions we desired of him.”
 In another part of the epistle, the same pre-
 cept is repeated, but the word *God* is used,
 instead of the word *Christ*--“We have confi-
 “dence toward *God*, and whatsoever we ask,
 “we receive of him.”^a Can a man read these
 two passages, and doubt, for a single moment,
 whether his Saviour be the God that heareth
 prayer?

The blessed martyr Stephen, just before
 he expired, preferred the following prayer to
 his Saviour, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”
 Can a departing soul be thus solemnly com-
 mitted into the hands of any one, but of him,
 who is “the God of the spirits of all flesh?”
 Does not St. Stephen here worship Christ; in
 the very same manner, in which, a little be-
 fore, Christ himself had worshipped the Fa-
 ther? Where is the difference between, “Fa-
 “ther, into thy hands I commend my spirit”
 --and--“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit?”
 Does not the martyr likewise address Christ,
 as the person who could forgive sins? Where
 is the difference, again, between--“Father,
 “forgive them, for they know not what they
 “do”--and--“Lord, lay not this sin to their
 “charge?”

^a Chap. iii. 22.

“ charge ?” Or shall a dying Christian scruple to say what St. Stephen said, because Christ does not appear to the one, as he was pleased to do to the other ? It is a cavil not fit to proceed from the mouth of a serious man.

We read of many persons, who, when Christ was upon earth, falling down upon their faces, and worshipping him, were never checked or reprov'd for so doing, as St. John was, when he offered to worship the angel, and Cornelius, when he made the same offer to St. Peter.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews, evincing the superiority of the Son of God over all created spirits, produces the following testimony, “ When he bringeth in his “ first begotten into the world, he saith, “ And let all the angels of God worship “ him^c.” If you ask, what kind of worship the apostle may be supposed to intend, let us turn to the Revelation. There, upon the exaltation of our Lord, after his sufferings, St. John represents to us the church

^c Heb. i. 6.

universal in heaven and earth, with the parts of created nature, and all the angelic intelligences, ascribing the very same “ blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, “ to him that sitteth on the throne, and to “ the Lamb,” in conjunction^d. In heaven, the will of God is duly performed, and all “ honour the Son, even as they honour the “ Father^e.” Why should it be otherwise on earth?

That it ought not to be otherwise, but that equal honour should be paid to both Father and Son, with the Holy Spirit, is evidently implied by the baptismal form running in the name of all the three. If the Holy Spirit were a property only, as the Socinians pretend, could a *property* be thus joined with the Father and the Son? They are not properties; they are persons, certainly. If the Son and the Spirit were creatures, could they be joined with the Father, in the solemn act of baptism? Baptism is the consecration of him, who is baptized, to the service---of whom? of God, and two creatures? no, surely, but of the

^d Rev. v. 13.

^e John v. 23.

Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and, whether St. John hath said it, or not, if there be any meaning in words, **THESE THREE ARE ONE**; they are the one object of our faith and our love, of our prayers and our praises. While this form continues to be used in the church, the doctrine of the **TRINITY** cannot perish from it; and he who denies glory and worship to be due to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, does, in effect, renounce his baptism; and ought to be initiated, by a new form, into a new religion.

Thus stands the scripture evidence: and we find the practice of the primitive Christians entirely conformable to it. A remarkable instance offers itself, very early, in the case of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. He suffered in the year 167. He joins God the Father and the Son together in his prayers for grace and benediction upon men, conceived in the following manly and exalted strain of piety and charity—"The God and
 " Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and
 " Christ himself the eternal High Priest,
 " the Son of God, build you up in faith,
 " and truth, and in all meekness, to live
 " without

“ without anger, in patience, in long suffering, and forbearance, and give you a lot and part among the saints, and to us with you, and to all them that are under Heaven, who shall believe in Jesus Christ our Lord, and in his Father who raised him from the dead ^f.” And when he was brought to the stake, he concluded his last prayer with this doxology to the whole Trinity—“ I bless thee, I praise thee, I glorify thee for all things, together with the eternal and heavenly Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, with whom, unto thee, and the Holy Spirit, be glory, both now, and for ever, world without end ^g.” So prayed this holy bishop, and blessed martyr of Christ, at the hour of his departure out of the world. As he had been a disciple of St. John the Evangelist, we cannot well suppose him ignorant of the proper object of Christian worship. We find him in possession of the doctrine of a coequal and coeternal Trinity, considered as that object; a doctrine which, we may venture to say, he did not derive from the Platonists of

^f Polycarp. Epist. ad Philipp. Sect. xii.

^g Martyr. Polycarp. apud Coteler. Patres Apostol. T. ii. p. 199.

Alexandria, from scholastic theology, or from the papal chair. And we may continue, it is hoped, to use the prayers in our own liturgy, though they conclude exactly like the prayer of Polycarp.

Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, suffered for the faith, fifty years before Polycarp, and had conversed familiarly with many of the Apostles. He begins one of his epistles in the following manner,—“ I glorify Jesus
 “ Christ our God, who hath given unto you
 “ this wisdom—*Δοξάζω Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν Θεόν, τὸν
 ἑγὼς ὑμᾶς σοφισάντα*^h. Could such men as these, instructed by the apostles themselves, be mistaken in the capital article of all religion, the object of divine worship? impossible! a man must have the credulity of an infidel to believe it.

Justin Martyr, who flourished about the middle of the second century, declares to the Pagans, that the object of Christian worship was the whole Trinity. “ We
 “ worship and adore (says he) the God of
 “ righteousness, and his Son, and the Holy
 “ Spirit of prophecy.” Yet, a little after,

^h Ignat. Epist. ad Smyrναeos.

he tells the emperors, " We hold it unlawful to worship any, but God aloneⁱ." So Origen, who lived in the former part of the third century,---" We worship and adore no creature, but the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost^k." Give me leave to insist a little on an argument suggested by these passages, because it seems for ever to determine the question concerning the faith of the primitive church, on the article of our Lord's true and proper Divinity. The Christians objected to the Pagans their idolatry. The Pagans retorted the objection on the Christians, as the worshippers of a crucified man. Here, you see, was a stroke aimed at the very heart of the new religion. And now, how do the Christians defend themselves? Had the charge, like many others, been false, they would certainly have denied it, at once. It behoved them so to have done; for the contest was *pro aris et focis*. They could never have continued to reproach their adversaries with a crime, of which they were notoriously guilty, themselves. But they do not deny the fact. They acknowledge it universally;

ⁱ Justin. Apol. ii.

^k Comment. in Epist. ad Rom. Lib. i.

and

and yet, at the same time, affirm, “ We
 “ worship God alone,---Θεον μὲν μόνον προσκυ-
 νῶμεν.” In their practice, then, they shewed
 their belief of Christ’s true Divinity. They
 worshipped him only upon this ground, that
 he was one God with the Father; and to
 have done it on any other supposition, had
 been idolatry, by their own confession.
 What are we, therefore, to think of our
 modern unitarians, who repeatedly, and
 as it should seem, seriously tell us, that all
 the fathers of the three first centuries were
 of their opinion¹? To say this, is to make
 them guilty of the grossest idolatry, and to
 involve them in a monstrous contradiction;
 they laid it down as a first principle, that
 God alone was to be worshipped; and, all
 the while, gave divine honour to one, whom
 (if these moderns say true) they did not
 hold to be God by nature, but a creature
 only.

Let any person, with attention and im-
 partiality, survey this argument again and
 again, on every side; and it will appear to

¹ “ All Christian people, for upwards of 300 years after
 “ Christ, ’till the council of Nice, were *generally* Unit-
 “ rians.” Mr. Lindfey’s Apology, P. 24.

be absolutely unanswerable. The earliest Christians professed to worship God alone; but they constantly and uniformly professed to worship Christ; therefore they deemed Christ to be very God. The same is to be said with regard to the Holy Spirit. No matter *how* the Son was begotten of the Father, or *how* the Spirit proceeds from both. The *mode* we have nothing to do with; it is above, and beyond us; it cannot be the subject of our reasonings. We are not now entangled in the thorny parts of the subject; we are not disputing about metaphysical niceties and distinctions. A plain matter of fact is before us. The premises are fixed, by ecclesiastical history, and the writings of the primitive apologists, firm as the everlasting hills; no other conclusion can be drawn from them by the art of man; and the argument is obvious to the common sense of the whole world.

During the persecutions under the heathen emperors, the martyrs, who suffered in them, commonly directed their prayers, as St. Stephen did, personally to Christ, in whose cause they laid down their lives, and into whose hands they resigned their spirits, commending

mending their souls to him, as unto a faithful Creator and Redeemer. In the Dioclesian persecution, as Eusebius informs us, the inhabitants of a city in Phrygia, men, women, and children, while assembled in the church, at their devotions, were by their enemies surprized and burnt, “ calling upon Christ, God over all, *τον επι παντων Θεον Χριστον επιβοωμενοι.*”¹ Many other instances occur in the same historian, where the dying martyrs address their prayers to Christ, under the highest titles and attributes of the Divinity, as the living and true God, the great king over all the earth, omniscient and almighty, the Son of God, and himself true and very God. And, as such, Eusebius says, the highest powers on earth confessed and adored him ^m.

Would you hear the contemporary writers, among the heathens, bearing testimony to the same great and important truth, concerning the object of worship in the earliest days of the Christian Church? You shall hear them.

¹ Euseb. Lib. viii. Cap. ii.

^m Euseb. Lib. x. Cap. iv. See the passages cited by Bingham, in Eccles. Antiq. B. xiii. Ch. ii.

Pliny

Pliny lived in the beginning of the second century, and, as a judge under Trajan, took the confessions of some revolting Christians. He says, they declared to him, " their custom was, to meet on a certain day, before it was light, and, among other parts of their worship, sing an hymn to Christ, as to their God--*Carmenque Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem.*"^a

Towards the close of the same century, Lucian, or whoever was the author of the dialogue styled *Philopatris*, bearing his name, and certainly written about that time, introduces, in a scoffing way, a Christian catechist instructing a pagan catechumen. The latter asks, " By whom, then, shall I swear ?" that is, whom shall I take to be my God, the object of my worship? The answer is, " By that God that reigns on high, the great, immortal, heavenly God, and the Son of the Father, and the Spirit proceeding from the Father, One in Three, and Three in One. Take these for your Jupiter ; imagine this to be your God."^o

^a Plin. Lib. x. Ep. 97.

^o Lucian. *Philopatris*, prope fin.

Lucian, then, had evidently learned, and it was well known among the heathen in his time, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, or a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, constituted the object of Christian worship. The manner in which this testimony affected Socinus, well deserves your notice--“Nec vero nobis quidquam hactenus
 “legere contigit, quod trini istius Dei, a
 “Christianis jam tum recepti et culti, fidem
 “facere videatur magis, quam quæ ex dia-
 “logo, qui *Philopatris* inscribitur, et inter
 “Luciani opera numeratur, ad id proban-
 “dum affertur.”^p It might, perhaps, be some advantage to it in his esteem, as Dr. Waterland observes,^q that it came from a pagan, though it had not weight enough to conquer his prejudices; for he never wanted evasions. But you see in how very forcible a manner it struck his apprehension.

Such was the practice of the Christian church, respecting the worship of it's Saviour, from the very beginning, and during the three first ages; long before Arianism

^p Socin. adv. Eutrop. c. xv. p. 689. op.

^q Importance of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. p. 370.

appeared

appeared in the world, or any of those difficult questions were raised, which afterwards perplexed men with unintelligible subtleties, occasioned by the restless endeavours and sophistry of the Arian party.

What shall we, then, say to these things? What can we say, but that He, to the invocation of whose name salvation is promised; He, whose name his disciples, before they were called Christians, invoked, and were known to be his disciples by so doing; He, in whose name the Apostles were accustomed to give their benedictions, and concerning whom St. John says, that, "whatever we ask of him according to his will, we shall have the petitions we desired of him;" He, who was worshipped by men, without reproving them for it, on earth, and to whom, in heaven, all the angelic hosts, with the spirits of the redeemed, and the whole creation of God, give glory and honour; He, whom the church universal professed, from the beginning, to adore; and into whose hands the dying martyrs, from Stephen downward, committed their departing spirits; He, to whose service and worship, with that of the Father and the

Holy Ghost, every Christian is dedicated, in baptism; that this person is, indeed, what St. Paul certainly styles him, "God "over all, blessed for ever";" and that we all may, and ought to use the words of St. Thomas, uttered not, as is pretended, by way of exclamation to the Father, but in an immediate address to the Son,---("Then "Thomas answered, and said *unto him*)--- "My Lord, and my God^s."

For consider well with yourselves---if we are to worship only the Lord our God, as the primitive Christians professed to do; and if we are, yet, to worship Christ, as they also professed to do; must it not of necessity follow, that Christ is the Lord our God?

If millions of his servants, from all the different parts of the world, are to invoke him by prayer, and he hears the prayer of the heart, as well as that of the lips, must he not be omniscient and omnipresent, to do this? The argument has often been urged with success against saint worship. It holds equally strong against creature worship.

^t 1 Rom. ix. 5.

^s John xx. 28.

If St. Paul blamed the heathen, because they gave divine worship to those *μη Φυσει θεοις*^t, shall we be blameless, when we worship Christ, unless he be *Φυσει Θεος*?

If divine worship be due to Christ, must he not be possessed of that divine dignity and excellence, which are the proper foundation of it? and can these be communicated to a creature? between the creature and it's Creator, and the honour due respectively to each, must not the difference be ever infinite? Socinus, who held Christ to be a mere man, and yet held divine worship to be due to him, was confounded and silenced by this very argument, in a conference with one of his disciples^u, who carried his principle to it's proper conclusion, and denied Christ to be at all the object of divine worship.

But do not the scriptures affirm, that Christ is to be worshipped in consequence of his sufferings, and exaltation, and the power with which he was then invested? undoubtedly. And do not the same Scriptures in-

^t Gal. iv. 8.

^u Frankenius. See an abstract of the dispute, in Bishop Bull's *Primitiva et Apostolica Traditio de Jesu Christi Divinitate*. Cap. vi. p. 393.

form us, that God was worshipped in consequence of his having created the world, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? He was then worshipped in the new relation of Creator, as Christ was worshipped, upon his Ascension, in the new relation of Redeemer. But God was worshipped before the world was created, and will be worshipped after its dissolution. The Son of God was worshipped before he entered upon the work of Redemption. He had glory with the Father before the foundation of the world^w; he existed "in the form of God," before he existed "in the likeness of man;" that is, he was God, before he was man. And, as God, he will be worshipped to eternity, when his mediatorial kingdom, as Messiah, shall be at an end.

The worshippers of Christ are charged with idolatry. If he be a mere man, or, indeed, if he be a creature, there is foundation for the charge. But if, at his birth, "God" was "manifest in the flesh^x," of what crime are they guilty, who deny him

^w John xvii. 5.

^x 1 Tim. iii. 16.

the honour due to him, and turn his humiliation, on their account, into an argument against his Divinity? and let it be observed, that if we are guilty of idolatry, the whole church of Christ has been guilty of it, in the grossest manner, from the days of the Apostles to this present hour.

It hath been asserted, that the worship of Christ is inconsistent with his office of Mediator. But why? it seems rather to be implied, than excluded; since a Mediator must communicate with both parties; and our method of communicating with Christ must be by praying to him. Is there any contradiction, or incongruity, in the conduct of our devotions, if we sometimes beseech the Father to pardon and bless us, for the sake of his dear Son; and, at other times, intreat the Son to bestow upon us those mercies, which the Father has granted for his sake? the same is to be said of the Spirit and his comforts, given by the Father, through the Son. In one word; if the divine persons, in the œconomy of man's redemption, have graciously condescended to assume these offices, and to act in these characters, shall we therefore say, they are
not

not divine? This consideration alone seems to afford a general and satisfactory answer to all the objections founded on those texts, which intimate disparity and inferiority; which speak of *sending*, and *being sent*, and the like.---How mournful is the reflection, that this very consideration, which ought to fill our hearts with wonder, love, and praise, should be made the occasion of denying the Lord that bought us, and the Spirit that consecrates us to glory and immortality!---Lord, what is man! behold, with compassion, his miserable depravity; and open his eyes, that he may behold it, himself!

But you, my brethren, (I address myself to the younger part of my audience,) have not so unlearned Christ. You know in whom you have believed; and you know the importance of believing Him to be, what He really is. The question we have been discussing is not of a trifling or indifferent nature. It relates to the prime and leading article of all religion. It is not a point of speculation merely: our daily practice is concerned in its determination; according to which, we are led either to honour, or to dishonour our Redeemer. Minds honest
and

and ingenuous, like yours, will find no difficulty in forming a right judgment upon the subject. In order to do it, there is no necessity for you to plunge into all the metaphysical depths of the controversy. The dispute lies in a small compass. It turns upon a fact, whether Christ was, or was not, the object of divine worship, in the apostolical times, and those immediately succeeding. The evidence has been clearly, I would hope, though briefly stated to you, in the preceding discourse. But I would wish you to search, and collect it more at large for yourselves; those of you, especially, who are preparing to teach others the truth, and to guard them against the various errors which mark these latter days. The scriptural part of the evidence is contained in a little volume, which should never be out of your hands. The remainder may be found in the epistles of the apostolical fathers, the apologies of Justin Martyr and one or two more, and the ecclesiastical history of Eusebius. Should I say, that all these might be read, with ease, in two months, I should say no more than the truth. And so much, at least, of primitive antiquity ought to be studied by every divine; indeed,

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by

by every Christian, who has leisure and ability. For why should any man continue ignorant of that, which is so soon, and so easily known? Be conversant in the scriptures, and acquaint yourselves well with the doctrine and the practice of the church, in its earliest and purest days, when you first enter upon the ministry; and the efforts of unhappily misguided men will in vain be afterwards exerted, to move you from the rock of your salvation. Remember Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever; and consider how great things he hath done for you; things, which, had they been left for a creature to effect, had been unperfected at this hour; they must have ceased, to eternity; “none of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him.” To withhold prayer from your Saviour, is impious perverseness; to withhold praise and thanksgiving is impious ingratitude. Heaven resounds with salvation to the Lamb triumphant; and shall earth be sullenly silent? Christ rejoiced in his afflictions, and esteemed them glory, for your sake. No temptation could prevail upon the Lord, in the hour of suffering and sorrow, to relinquish his gracious purpose,

pose, and desert the cause of his disciples; let no temptation prevail upon them to desert and disown the cause of their Lord. Would any man persuade you, to refuse divine worship to your Redeemer? Reject the attempt (whoever makes it) with a noble scorn; and, whatever others may think, or however they may act, upon the occasion, do you call to mind the generous confession uttered by the martyr Polycarp, when the Roman Proconsul had urged him to deny Christ.---“ Four score and six years “ (said the venerable old bishop) have I “ served him, and never yet received any “ thing but good at his hands: how, then, “ shall I now blaspheme my King and my “ Saviour? ”

⁂ Martyrium Polycarpi apud Coteler. Patr. Apostol. T. ii. p. 198.

F I N I S.

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and D. PRINCE, in OXFORD.

I. *THE Influence of Christianity on Civil Society.* A Sermon preached at St. Mary's in Oxford, at the Affizes: before the Honourable Mr. Justice NARES, and Mr. Baron EYRE; and before the University; on Thursday, March 4, 1773. Published at the Request of the Judges.

II. A Sermon preached in the Chapel of the Asylum for Female Orphans, at the Anniversary Meeting of the Guardians of that Charity; May 19, 1774.